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A BROKEN BRIDGE.

I REACHED the little Welsh town of Abermaw one boisterous afternoon in autumn at about four o'clock, after a long tramp over the mountains. Abermaw, as its name implies, is situated at the mouth of the river Maw, which here forms an estuary about a mile broad. The town itself faces the open sea; the harbour lies about half a mile up the estuary; whilst between the town and the harbour was the outline of a huge bridge then in course of construction. Abermaw is a little bit of a place, consisting of an hotel, a few shops, a church, a chapel of ease, and half-a-dozen lodging-houses, which are built on a platform of sand, the work of the sea and river in concert or in conflict. The old fishing village is perched upon the rocks above, tier upon tier, the lintel-stone of one house looking down the chimney of the house below, and is reached by rude rocky steps, where the children of the village swarm up and down, and yet rarely contrive to break their necks.

The further shore of the estuary was a triangular spit of sand, across which was a track that joined the high-road at a point where it commenced to mount the shoulder of a wave-beaten cliff on the face of which it was terraced; for on the further or southern side of the estuary the sea washed up to the very base of the rocks that formed the rugged fringe of this iron-bound coast. There was a ferry from the Abermaw side to the spit of sand, and thence, by a detour of several miles, you could make your way along the southern bank of the river to the town of Dolbadarn. As the crow flies, Dolbadarn was not more than seven miles distant from Abermaw, but it could not be reached by any practicable track in less than from ten to eleven miles; for the river took a wide sweep to the north, and, in addition to the detour thus caused, the first bridge where the road crossed the river was at a point a good way wide of Dolbadarn, so that, altogether, the distance was lengthened to that above mentioned. On the other hand, if you crossed the ferry, and made your way across the sand to the highway, the distance was much

the same, and this latter route was of course only practicable to foot-passengers.

Although I had reached Abermaw in the guise of a free and independent pedestrian, yet my liberty was of a restricted nature. My wife and children had gone by the regular coach-route to Dolbadarn, and I had crossed the mountains by a wild foot-track, promising to join them that night at Dolbadarn in time for dinner; for I had intended to take the coach at Abermaw, which would have brought me to the end of my journey in good time. This coach, however, I had missed by just five minutes. My walk that day had been a long one, and I was rather fagged, and should probably have hired a conveyance for the remainder of the distance; but the manner of the landlord of the hotel was so abrupt, and, as I thought, offensive, in answer to my inquiries, that I resolved, come what might, he should not be a sixpence the richer for me.

I walked on till I came to a little public-house at the further end of the town, close to the rough quay that bordered the estuary, and turned in there for a glass of beer and a crust of bread and cheese, as well as for the purpose of making a few inquiries as to my route.

'Well, indeed,' said Evan Rowlands the landlord, 'there's no possible way to get to Dolbadarn to-night, not unless you take a car from Mr Chones.'

'I shan't have a car from Mr Jones,' I said. 'Can't I hire one anywhere else?'

Evan shook his head; there was no horse or car in Abermaw except the horses and cars owned by Mr Jones.

'Very well, then,' I said, I would walk.

'Not possible,' said Evan; 'it's more than ten miles.'

'I wouldn't mind the distance, only I've walked five-and-twenty miles already.'

'Dear me!' said Evan; 'you're very strong!'

'Can't I get a boat part of the way?' I suggested.

Evan put his head out at the door. 'No!' he cried; 'the tide has just turned; it is running down very strong.'

'Then there is nothing for it but walking,' I said; 'I must go round by Llanfair Bridge.' But I didn't like the idea of this ten miles walk through the mist and gathering gloom.

'Stop!' said Evan. 'Why shouldn't you go over the bridge—the railway bridge?'

'Is the bridge passable, then? Can you get across?'

'O dear, yes. The gentlemen from the railway come over very often, and to-day Hugh Pugh and David Morris did come over from the Dolbrith Quarry.'

'And what distance will that save me?'

'Four or five miles; yes, sure.'

'And the bridge is quite safe?'

'Oh, it is very strong and safe indeed; or how should Hugh Pugh and David Morris come over, and the railway gentlemen too; yes, sure.'

'And the railway people won't object to my going over?'

'They've all knocked off work for the day, and there won't be a soul near the bridge but yourself.'

'Then of course I'll go over it.'

But I found that there were certain difficulties in the way. The railway bridge crossed the estuary at a point about a quarter of a mile from the little inn that formed the extremity of the town, at a spot where its channel was narrowed to a distance of about three-quarters of a mile. The unfinished bridge was constructed of piles firmly driven into the bed of the river, from which rose huge piers of timber to the height of about forty feet. Along these were massive balks, destined to support the platform of the bridge, whilst each pier was strengthened and supported, and strengthened and supported its neighbour, by an arrangement of cross-beams and ties.

When I reached the bank of the river with my guide, Evan Rowlands, I found that there was a considerable hiatus between the shore and the nearest pier—about a hundred yards. Evan, however, was prepared with a plan for reaching it. A friend of his was the master of the little sloop, the *Ann Jones*, which was lying in the tiny creek above. He and his mate were now on board her, and they had got their little dingy with them. Evan would borrow the boat, and drop down with the stream, and deposit me at the foot of the nearest pier.

'But why not ferry me right over the river?' I asked.

'Not possible,' said Evan. There were shallows and quicksands at the other side which at this time of the tide were very dangerous.

So we made our way along the road which overlooks the estuary, till we came to the little harbour. Evan had no difficulty in borrowing the dingy, and we were soon afloat, shooting quickly down the stream.

It was almost dark now, for although the sun was not yet down, the storm that was gathering up on the horizon obscured his light. Great volumes of cloud and vapour were driving up before the wind, which howled and moaned intermittently, as blast succeeded blast, and died away again. The wind and the tide in opposition made the water pretty rough, and our boat danced up and down in a very lively way. Presently the black skeleton of the bridge loomed upon us through the mist, and Evan dexterously brought up his boat in the little eddy that was formed by the abutments of the pier, and then he called to me to jump

from the stern of the dingy on to a cross-piece that formed a sort of platform a foot or so from the water's edge.

I jumped, and landed safely on the balk, and then I found that my way upwards was by climbing the nearest pier, across which were nailed rough, irregular staves, which constituted what is called a workman's ladder. I had no intention of undertaking any acrobatic feats, and the idea of climbing up to that giddy height by such rough, unreliable supports was distasteful enough. I wouldn't try it. I would go back in the boat to dry land once more. But the boat had spun away on the tide, and was now far out of earshot, or indeed eyeshot either. There I stood, then, in the midst of a rushing, raging sea, upon a balk of timber, embracing a huge black pier, the head of which was lost in the gloom and mist overhead. I couldn't stay here; I must get across the bridge at all hazards, and my only way was upwards.

Up I went slowly, step by step, testing each frail splintered stave ere I trusted my weight to it. More than one broke away in my hands, and fell into the sea below. But when I reached the top, I thought, then all this danger would be over. I should find a firm, secure platform—a rail, or, at least, a rope for the hand.

When I came to the top of the pier, I saw stretched out before me a beam, suspended, as it seemed, in mid-air, a narrow beam—more like a rope, it seemed to me—stretched over this wild abyss of raging waves—that, and nothing else. There were footprints in the narrow ridge of timber—it was not more than two feet wide at the broadest—and the sight of them gave me courage. Men had passed over here before me; I would pass too. And so, without giving myself a moment more to think, I stepped; and the moment when letting go with my hands, I stood upon that topmost round of the ladder, and balanced myself for an instant, as I placed my foot upon the plank—that moment in which I seemed to quiver, and sway to and fro, high up on this giddy perch, beyond the ken of any human eye—that moment of dizzy terror, of strange whirling thoughts, of instincts to cast myself headlong into the sea, was in sensation as any ordinary week of placid being; and yet it came and went like any other moment, and I stood erect upon the beam, and began my perilous way.

I heard the wind far off, bellowing among the breakers on the bar; I heard it screeching and howling over the flats. I felt a moment's calm, the strange unnatural hush, and then the rush and leap of the storm, as it hurtled by me. Dashing the salt spray into my eyes, it came, seizing all the loose corners of my apparel, and cracking them like whip-lashes, carrying away my feeble breath in its wild course, but leaving me—yes, thank God—leaving me still balanced on my plank.

The gust had cleared the mists for a space, and I could now see before me, though indistinctly enough, but I could see that there was only another length of unprotected balk; beyond that was a broad, safe platform of timber, stretched from pier to pier. Oh, to feel that platform safe under my feet! I traversed the balk almost at a run. I must reach safety before there came another gust of that fierce wind.

I heard it coming now, but I was almost home—yes, home, for that rough, unsheltered platform, on

this rude night, seemed like a home to me. I was stepping firmly and quickly along. Suddenly a chasm seemed to open under my feet—a horrible chasm. The beam on which I stood came suddenly to an end. For some eight feet it had been cut away, and there was nothing to help me over this dreadful gap. Without wings, it were impossible to pass.

All hope left me. I knew that to retrace my steps was impossible to me. Even if I reached the end from which I had started, I should be no better off than here, and the hopelessness of the position weakened my every nerve. Once more I heard the wind rising, and hurtling along towards me. I would cling to life as long as I could. I knelt down on the wet, slippery balk, clasped it with my arms, sat astride it. The gust came up fierce and strong, passed over me once more—once more spared me.

But I felt I could not survive another such attack; I should be blown away like a leaf. And yet there was no hope of escape—none. It was only a question of moments how long, with stiffening limbs, I could cling to this rough beam; then a plunge into darkness.

Still I had time to think. What were my thoughts! A helpless sense of cruelty, of the horrible unfeelingness and malignity of this hurtling wind, of those raging waters. A sad mortification, too, and sense of injustice, that I should lose my life for nothing; a pleasant ramble turned to such an evil end. Of the past I thought nothing; it was nothing to me now—a tale that was told; that was all. Of the future, nothing either, except a dim and awful wonder. But plainly, vividly before my eyes I saw the figure of my wife, sitting at work by the fire, waiting and watching for me—for me, who never should come. That was the bitterness of it.

And yet withal I was not unconscious of a certain vague sense of the ludicrous—of scorn of myself, that I should be thus stuck up astride a beam, like some lad at play, a sport for the buffeting of the elements. With this, too, an unspeakable rage; a kind of crushed defiance, a revolt against the doom which was imminent, a revolt which felt itself hopeless and useless from its beginning.

Whilst all this storm of conflicting thoughts was whirling through my brain, the turmoil outside was diminishing. The wind had hushed for a while, and across my face there came for a moment a sort of ruddy glow, the last beams of the sun settling rapidly into the sea. The vapours divided for a moment, the huge dark mass of a mountain frowned down upon me—for a moment only—then the clouds encompassed me once more—the glow died away—the awful gloomy gray of night began to gather in upon me like a net.

Should I drop into the sea, and end it all? To die in the dark would be more horrible than anything else. Even on the quietest, most resigned death-bed, the loss of light is the most disquieting trouble to the departing soul. Light! more light! is the last cry of the spirit in extremity. And now it seemed as though nature had determined to spare me no pang of all the gathering horrors of my doom. Darkness and despair were settling down upon my soul.

Then came the storm once more with a rush of gathered rain, a howl, a shout, a roar of triumph, as the shrill wind trumpeted past, precursor of

more furious blast. I could bear no more. A sapless, nerveless form I was, swept from the beam like a withered leaf from a branch, and I fell—catching at some cross-beams as I fell, but losing my hold in a moment, and dropping helplessly down.

Once more consciousness returned. A vague silvery light was diffused about me, above were stars shining, huge barks of timber glimmered overhead. I was stretched upon a bed of wet sand, lying on my back, looking up into the sky.

I was not dead, then. No! Was I maimed, crushed? I drew up one limb after another, fearing lest a sudden shout of agony should betray some grievous hurt. But no! I was sound in limb; and as I raised myself and looked about, I felt that, except for dizziness and a wonderful ringing that was ceaselessly going on in my head, I was unhurt. And I was saved! That was as might happen.

When I rose and stood upon my feet, I looked around me, and saw that I had fallen upon a little island, a narrow spit of sand that had formed in the eddy caused by the pile of the bridge. On each side of it ran a strong and rapid current. All this I saw by the light of the moon, sometimes bright, sometimes obscured, as she parted her way among the fast driving clouds.

Distantly across the waters shone the lights of the little town. It had its gas lamps, which sparkled brilliantly in the night; and from out of the black rocks which shewed against the sky-line, here and there the soft light of a candle in a cottage window gleamed like a fairy lamp.

On the other side of the estuary there were no lights; but the straining eye might discern the gloom of high hills, that seemed, indeed, only like darksome chasms in the sky; but as I watched, I saw a tiny star that was gliding among the rocks. Now seen, now lost, I followed it with longing eyes; and listening intently, I heard the clatter of horses' hoofs, and the murmur of wheels rising and falling, as the road wound in and out among the rocks further or nearer. It was some carriage rolling rapidly towards home—towards my home, and here was I a castaway.

I shouted, but my voice seemed lost in the great space. The wind carried it up the river, blew it away into stifled fragments. It was useless to cry. No one would hear me. How long should I have to live? Was there any chance that I might yet escape? I could not swim; the channel on either side was, therefore, an unpassable barrier. Even had I been an excellent swimmer, I doubt if in my enfeebled state I could have won the further bank of the channel, where the current was running the least swiftly. How long would my island remain uncovered by the sea?

Six or eight feet above my head, tangled masses of sea-weed hanging in the interstices of the wood-work shewed the highest reach of the tide. The ebb had commenced an hour before I started from Abermaw. Allowing an hour for my subsequent adventures, the ebb would still have three hours to run; then another three hours' flood would elapse before the tide would once more reach me. I remembered that I had a flask of metal in my pocket which still contained a dram of brandy, and that I had a few fragments of biscuit in my pocket, remaining of some that my wife had

packed up for my use a couple of days before. I drank the brandy and munched the biscuits, and felt again hopeful. Six hours! Why, in that time help might come. Death was no longer imminent.

But I was entirely wrong. The strong south-westerly gales had piled up the waters about the mouth of the estuary, so that the ebb was checked, and the flood increased, and the tide ran out only some three hours. I must have been longer lying on the sand, too, than I had calculated, for, as I watched the waters hurrying down on each side of me, I noticed that the current seemed to slacken all of a sudden; then it stopped, so that a fragment of bleached wood that was floating downward came to a rest, then moved slowly once more upwards. The tide had turned.

In a very short time the expanse of waters before me, that had just now seemed a broad river outlet, scored and marked with sand-banks, assumed the appearance of an agitated sea. Short waves hurried along, their white crests gleaming in the moonlight; they came in serried lines, tier over tier; the hoarse roar of the advancing tide reverberated in the air, mingling in my brain with the strange rattle as of bells that never ceased to jangle therein.

How remorseless they seemed those waves hurrying up, like hounds who view their prey! And yet it was a solemn scene; and what there was of dignity and grandeur in the sight, half reconciled me to the thought that my life would be swallowed up ere long in these advancing battalions of serried waves; for now the bitterness of death was past; its terrors had vanished; I felt a profound sadness—that was all.

How far could I climb up these slimy, slippery posts and buttresses, that seemed to mock me with their lying proffers of safety? A couple of cross-beams or ties which bound together the lower ends of the piers afforded at their intersection a sort of angular resting-place, where I could, for a time perhaps, find a refuge from the waves. This was far below high-water mark, so that to reach it would only give me a short respite from my final agony; but, for all that, I determined to attempt it. As soon as the water covered the little island on which I stood, I would try to climb this slippery beam, that rose from the sand, in which it was partly buried, at an angle of about forty-five degrees.

With the tide rose the wind; with the wind came rain and fog. The moon, blurred and indistinct, shone faintly for a while, and then vanished altogether, although her diffused light still made everything darkly visible. Soon the waves were dashing at my feet, the sand a pulp beneath them. Now was the time to make my last effort for a little more life. But I found that I had overrated my own powers. I crawled a few feet up the slippery timber; then I fell back. Again I tried, and again; but it was of no use. Strength does not come of eager desire to be strong. All that I could do was to clasp my arms round the beam, and stand upright, awaiting the coming of the waters.

The water rose, not gradually, but in pulses. Smaller waves came and went, and left no change of level; but every now and then some heavier, fiercer billow would come in with a devouring sweep, covering me with its foam and spray, receding again, but at each recession leaving a greater

depth of swaying, life-like water. These attacks, like buffets from the hand of some skilled boxer, left me weaker and weaker at every blow. And it was so treacherous too, the water. It would draw away for a time, leaving me free almost to my knees; and then, as if driven by some sudden impulse, it would gather itself up, and return in a great seething swathe of water that would swallow me up from head to foot.

The end was fast coming now. I had ceased to feel anything. Only a dogged determination to stick to life to the last, kept me clinging to my beam.

But, what was that sound? A long and piercing scream, a roar, and a rumble, and a rattle—it was an engine!

An engine coming along the completed part of the bridge, shrieking and screaming, and dashing out great wafts of white steam into the stormy air. The sound gave me fresh life and vigour. Human creatures were within reach, at all events. If I could make them hear me, I might yet be saved.

The engine came slowly along, and I heard the voices of men shouting to one another. Why, then, should they not hear me? I tried, too, to shout, but my voice stuck in my throat. I couldn't make a sound louder than a whisper, no, not with all the good-will I had to shout like an archangel.

The engine came so near at last that I could see the glow of her fires through the interstices of the flooring of the bridge. And now there were men standing with lanterns at the very extremity of the bridge; and still I could not make them hear.

For an instant the glad thought had struck me that I had been missed, and that these men had come to look for me; but the next moment I saw the folly of the idea. Days might elapse before my fate was known. I was not even yet beyond the time I had fixed for reaching home. No; the men were railway workmen, perhaps going to do a night's shift of work on the bridge; and I couldn't make them hear.

Suddenly, I heard a sharp quick bark, and then a growl as of anger or inquiry, and I was conscious that there was a dog with the men above. The dog's faculties were keener than the men's; perhaps it was possible I might make *him* hear; so I barked, a shrill snapping bark, with which I had often deceived my own terrier Jock. The dog acknowledged the challenge, and replied furiously. Then I heard the voice of a man shouting to the dog to be quiet; but the dog barked still more furiously, standing at the very verge of the platform, as though it would throw itself over. Then some men came to the edge of the platform too, and peered over, and then in my extremity I gave a cry—a wild, despairing cry. Then a huge hoarse wave dashed over me.

If it had not been for the consciousness that help was near, I could not have held on against that furious rush of waters; but I did hold on, at least I think so; and when the wave receded, a bright dazzling light shone into my eyes, a light from the bridge, where some one was holding what seemed to be a portable sun, but that was actually a piece of burning magnesium wire. Then everything disappeared in the blackest darkness.

'Did you see anything?' cried a voice.

'I'm not sure; I thought I saw something move.'

A couple of lamps from the engine were now

brought, and placed at the edge of the platform: they lit up the beams and rafters of the bridge, but the light seemed to be lost in the dark waters. Ah! they would never see me!

Once more I had strength to cry.

'Ah! it's a man down there,' I heard somebody shout.

A long plank was run over the gap in the bridge, then another; along the two, a portable windlass was quickly wheeled; a bucket descended, in it a man with a lantern.

'Hollo, mate!' he cried as he caught sight of my white face in the focus of his lamp, 'what the deuce are you doing here?'

In another moment I was standing in safety on the further side of the bridge. I owed my rescue to the unexpected visit of the chief-engineer of the line, who had come down to see with his own eyes the manner in which the bridge behaved in a heavy gale, and had driven with the engine to the farthest accessible point of the platform.

What a comforting glass of hot brandy-and-water that was of which I partook by the warmth of the engine furnace, and how exhilarating the run homewards on the swift shrieking engine!

I was at Dolbadarn in time for dinner, after all. As I sat down to the cheerful meal with friends who were discussing the light ordinary topics of the day, I looked about me, wondering if I were really here in actual corporeal presence, or if my life had ended in that last rush of water, and I were only dreaming, 'for in that sleep of death what dreams may come!'

GEORGE GROTE.*

GEORGE GROTE was born as it were 'in the purple' of commerce, his grandfather and father having been bankers before him, and he himself an eldest son. From his earliest youth he was designed for a partnership in Grote, Prescott, and Company, and in view of that prospect was not permitted to spend the usual time of boys of his own class in education. He was, indeed, for six years at Charterhouse—without particularly distinguishing himself in the scholarship for which he was fated to be afterwards so famous—but left that seminary for a high stool in the bank in 1810, when he was but sixteen years of age. We are far from exaggerating the advantages of public-school education, and so far as Latin and Greek were concerned, which was probably all the education he received, Grote could afford to dispense with it; but what he could not afford to dispense with (as we shall presently have to shew) was the general society of his contemporaries. By nature, Grote was one of those thoughtful but inert lads, of whom we hear it said that 'they have never been boys,' and his early withdrawal from boy-life was, without doubt, hurtful to his character. His paternal grandfather was a Bremen burgher; and the grandfather on his mother's side a Dr Peckwell, one of the chaplains of the Countess of Huntingdon,† so

little of geniality or vivacity was likely to accrue to him from descent. His father himself appears to have been of commonplace type enough; very particular about the carrying on of his business, but preferring to depute it to others, while he amused himself in the country with regular shooting, and the occasional discharge of the duties of High-sheriff. He kept George's nose very close to the grindstone, which that young gentleman, though not given to the gaities of his age (unless playing on the violoncello can be enumerated among them), resented exceedingly. He wanted to be studying German philosophy, instead of accompanying 'the walk clerk' on his rounds, which in those days even junior members of a firm were wont to do: and on those evenings when it was his duty to stay in Threadneedle Street to 'lock up,' he plunged into a vortex of metaphysics, classics, and political economy. Of society, he at his home saw nothing, for his mother had imbibed Calvinistic views, and thought it wicked to ask people to their country-house; and his letters are full of complaints of dull evenings spent with his father's City friends over the bottle. Yet a romance occurred even to him, and under these ultra-prosaic circumstances. At nineteen, he fell in love with the lady, who, nearly sixty years afterwards, has given us this record of the incident, then Miss Harriet Lewin of Beckenham: he would have declared his passion, but for the intervention of a Mr E—, a reverend gentleman of some fortune, residing in the district, who exercised over him a powerful interest as a scholar and critic, and who assured him that her heart and hand were already engaged. This extinguished his hopes, and filled him with all the melancholy proper to the situation. His father, perceiving the change in his son's spirits, questioned him as to the cause, and having learned it, exacted a promise from him that he would never propose marriage to any woman without the parental sanction. George gave the promise readily enough, feeling, doubtless, at the time, that it would cost him nothing; but in the end he had reason to regret it; for a few weeks afterwards it came to his knowledge that Mr E— had told him a falsehood with respect to Miss Lewin, in the hope of securing her for himself. George in vain appealed to his father to release him from his pledge; but Mr Grote senior declined to do so, and compelled him to give up all thoughts of marriage, upon the ground of his youth, and also, which seems less reasonable, because he did not feel inclined to set apart any portion of his large income for the maintenance of a second *ménage* in the family. It is both curious and amusing to note the indications of dislike towards her future father-in-law, which, though she herself lays claim to be a philosopher, our lady biographer permits to peep out throughout the book. And, indeed, he seems to have shewn himself somewhat of a selfish martinet from first to last towards the young couple.

About this time, as if to console him for his disappointment in love, George Grote contracted

mony that he should exercise some sort of control over the character of the doctrines therein inculcated. Lady Huntingdon, who was very Evangelical in her views, demurred to this. Appeal being made to Mr Erskine, he decided that the Countess's rank authorised her to nominate her own chaplains, and that they could lawfully officiate as such in chapels not consecrated by the bishop!

* *The Personal Life of George Grote.* By Mrs Grote. John Murray.

† Of the origin of the clerical designation, Mrs Grote gives us a curious account, and one which seems to us to require some explanation. She states (upon the authority of the late Marquis of Lansdowne) that Lady Huntingdon having built a chapel, wished to have it consecrated: the bishop made it a condition of his performing that cere-

a remarkable friendship, destined to have a great influence over his future career. An interesting letter, written when he was twenty-five years of age, to his friend, George Norman, details the first germs of it:

'I have breakfasted and dined several times with Ricardo, who has been uncommonly civil and kind to me. I have met Mill often at his house, and hope to derive great pleasure and instruction from his acquaintance, as he is a very profound thinking man, and seems well disposed to communicate, as well as clear and intelligible in his manner. His mind has, indeed, all that cynicism and asperity which belong to the Benthamian school, and what I chiefly dislike in him is, the readiness and seeming preference with which he dwells on the faults and defects of others, even of the greatest men! But it is so very rarely that a man of any depth comes across my path, that I shall most assuredly cultivate his acquaintance a good deal farther. I miss yours very much, my dear George, for I despair of finding in my walk through life any other persons whom I can love in addition to those very few whom I love already. I do not see anywhere around me a single person in addition on whom my heart can rest with pleasure. My dead friends in Calf and Russia still continue faithful and interesting; and if it were not for them, life would be a very waste indeed.'

This James Mill, as everybody knows, was the famous father of the still more famous John Stuart Mill, and the ascendancy of his powerful mind over George Grote became soon apparent; and here again this biography has an interest of its own to the student of human nature in the little touches of jealousy displayed by its unconscious compiler. Mr Mill's convictions of the superior advantages of democratic government over the monarchical or aristocratic, and his contempt for the ruling classes, are described as amounting to 'positive fanaticism.' Our authoress herself was much imbued in after-life with her husband's democratic opinions; but the 'gentlemanly interest' was dear to her, as it is to most ladies, in spite of herself. She had numerous friends and connections, she is careful to tell us, among the aristocratic portion of society, and her inclination would have led her to cultivate their acquaintance; but the rooted aversion to 'swell-dom,' as it is profanely called, which animated the mind of the future historian of Greece, obliged her to relinquish all such intercourse; and for this she had to thank James Mill. Mr Bentham was another the force of whose friendship for her husband at this period acted in the same direction. Being a man of easy fortune, this philosopher kept a good table, and took pleasure in receiving guests, though never more than one at a time. 'To his one guest he would talk fluently, yet' [surely this is another feminine touch] 'without caring to listen in his turn. He had a certain talent for music, too; had been a decent fiddle-player in his day, and still managed to play on the organ, which was, I may mention, situated at the top of the house, looking into and over a spacious garden belonging to Jeremy's residence.'

At this period (1817) John Stuart Mill was but a boy of twelve years of age, studying, with his father for his sole preceptor, under the paternal roof; and, though wonderfully forward and learned for his years, was kept in a state of much repression; though afterwards he joined the band of

philosophers, and became one of Grote's few personal friends.

In 1818, the young banker was once more thrown into the society of Miss Lewin, and wrung from his father a consent to an engagement between them on the hard condition of the marriage being postponed for two years. It was 'not without mortifying and embarrassing reflections' that Miss Lewin herself came into this arrangement; nevertheless, 'her long cherished preference for George Grote, coupled with a discerning appreciation of his general character, and especially of its suitability to her views of the value of literary communion and culture as an element of conjugal life, prevailed over all.'

From this period, George Grote kept a diary, in order that his *fiancée* should be informed of his way of life during the period of their engagement; which we do not think was a judicious step. Self-consciousness was already a failing with him, and there is nothing which tends to foster it more certainly than the setting down of every trivial incident in one's personal existence. There is a priggishness in these records of how Grote 'went over to "the Hollies," shaved there, and read Smith's *Wealth of Nations*;' how he studies Say *On the Accumulation of Capital*, and 'plays on the bass,' that irresistibly reminds one of Dr Casaubon in *Middlemarch*. He called Neptune Poseidon to the day of his death.

In the spring of 1820, the marriage of these still young people—the bridegroom was but twenty-four—took place, and a most well-assorted union it proved to be. From that moment the wife sympathised with all the pursuits of her husband, and assisted him in these not a little. It was to her suggestion, in fact, in later years, that the world is indebted for her husband's *opus magnum*, the *History of Greece*. In the first year of his marriage he published his first essay, in reply to an article of Sir James Mackintosh in the *Edinburgh*, and aimed against class representation.

He was at that time the principal working-partner in the banking-house in Threadneedle Street, where his father compelled him to reside. It contained under its roof no less than three private residences—his own, his father's, and Mr Prescott's, in which also slept and were boarded, at the expense of the firm, no less than fifteen of the junior clerks. This place of residence was very ill adapted for Mrs George Grote's delicate constitution, yet the elder Grote insisted on their occupying it until her health utterly broke down, and compelled them to remove to Highgate. The allowance of the young couple, considering their condition of life, was also somewhat parsimonious; and the few pounds earned by Mrs Grote for her contributions to the *Westminster Review* seem to have been really 'a consideration' to the young banker and his wife. So early as the close of 1823, Mrs Grote, hearing the subject of Greek history frequently discussed in Threadneedle Street, proposed to her husband that he should compose such a work, and had the pleasure of seeing him at once direct his studies and researches in that direction. In 1826 he contributed a review of Mitford's *Greece* to the *Westminster*, which had a remarkable effect upon the world of scholars, and doubtless strengthened his resolve to pursue the *opus magnum*.

During the previous year, Grote formed his first open connection with politics in the public part he

took in founding the London University, a Radical institution, the success of which caused the Tories to bestir themselves in favour of its rival, King's College, to which George Grote the elder subscribed a hundred pounds. From the whole account, we gather that there were few sympathies or opinions common between father and son. In 1830, the former died, and the latter inherited the family estate in Lincolnshire (subject to an entail, however, on male heirs) and about forty thousand pounds. With his executorship, as well as his bank and his book upon his hands, one would have thought that just at this time Grote's mind would have been fully engaged; but yet we find him taking the most lively interest in what was called 'The French Revolution of July.' He even opened a credit with his bankers at Paris for five hundred pounds, for the use of the committee at the Hôtel-de-Ville; and every spare moment was spent in forwarding the success of the movement at home in favour of Reform. In the summer of 1832, after the passing of the bill, he took the important step of offering himself as a candidate for the City, and in the following December was elected, heading the poll by a majority of nine hundred and twenty-four votes. 'I doubt,' says Mrs Grote in her private journal, 'if ever I shall experience again the intense happiness of those inspiring moments when I looked down on the heads of four thousand free citizens in Guildhall, cheering and echoing the sentiments which for years we had privately cherished, but which were now first fearlessly avowed.' No member for London had ever before polled so many votes—namely, eight thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight. It was no wonder that a tender and sympathising wife felt proud of him: only one thing detracted from her joy. The *History* had perforce to be laid aside, in deference to his parliamentary duties; and the Currency Question, the Bank Charter Act, and other cognate subjects, taken up instead.

The question of the Ballot, as everybody knows, Mr Grote made peculiarly his own. His wife and he spent a good deal of time in devising methods of taking votes so as to insure secrecy; and at last a ballot-box was perfected, and forty or fifty models of it in wood were distributed over the kingdom. At the same time, the hope of such a measure being carried was infinitesimally small indeed; Mr Grote and about five others were all who professed Radical opinions in the House of Commons, and even this scanty band gave sign of diminution. 'I see what we are coming to, Grote,' said Charles Buller: 'at no distant date from this, you and I will be left to "tell" Molesworth.' Nevertheless, no chance of success was thrown away. Mr Grote did not disdain to procure the assistance of an elocution-master, in order that his speeches should lack nothing that care could give them; and it is curious to read that men like Sir William Molesworth, Roebuck, and Buller did the like. Grote's *début* in the House, as the mover of the debate upon the Ballot, was a very successful one; and when the speech, which occupied more than an hour, was finished, 'a cordial cheer arose which lasted several minutes.' Lord Broughton used to say: 'I have been in parliament all my life, and have listened to the orators of the century, including Canning, and the two best speeches I ever heard within those walls were (1) Macaulay's speech on the Copyright

Question, and (2) Grote's first speech on the Ballot.' From that date, and for a considerable period, the subject of our biography became a leading politician among the philosophical Radicals. In 1836, we find him among the founders of the Reform Club, and again, and even again, successfully contesting the City. Nevertheless, he was now elected by less and less majorities; and disappointment upon that account, as well as his desire to proceed with his *History*, caused him, in 1841, to retire from the House. Three years later, he left the banking-house, and gave himself entirely up to the composition of the *opus magnum*.

It is pleasant and characteristic of their mutual relations to learn that the negotiation with respect to bringing out her husband's book fell entirely to his wife's share. When she told him that she had arranged the matter with John Murray, he merely observed: 'I only hope the poor man will not be a loser by me.' In March 1846, the first two volumes were published, and produced among all students, and throughout the literary world, a very striking impression. 'From all sides, congratulation and eulogy flowed in upon the author . . . and I became for once the witness of a state of feeling on his part approaching to gratified self-love.'

Grote may at this time be said to have reached the zenith of his fame; and, certainly, if he had not 'adorned everything he had touched,' he had distinguished himself in all things he had attempted, and they were not small things. As an historian, indeed, he was in some respects unrivalled; and the surpassing interest he took in the old form of government he so well described was curiously illustrated when, in 1848, the French Republic was proclaimed. 'We were at the opera one evening in the month of June, in a pit-box. Between the acts, our friend Monckton Milnes came into our box. Presently, he whispered to me: "You see that man in the stalls, seated next to —? Well, that is the envoy from the French Republic." I immediately touched Grote on the sleeve, passing on this information. "Bless me! is it possible! Give me the opera-glass, that I may see him more distinctly." When Milnes left us, he said, with visible emotion: "I must go and call upon that gentleman immediately."'

The next morning, accordingly, saw Grote at the door of 'the Ambassador of the Republic,' who, a day or two afterwards, 'did us the honour to dine with us in Saville Row.' His enthusiasm even prompted him to visit Paris, partly for the pleasure of finding himself actually *living under a republic*, and partly, as Mrs Grote naively remarks, 'to shew his sympathy' with that government in the peril and disquietude from which it suffered. We do not learn that his personal presence in the capital did the cause much good, but it is evident that he imagined it would do so. Self-consciousness was apparently a weakness from which he could never divest himself, and which was unhappily fostered by those about him. He lived in the confined atmosphere of a clique, who exaggerated his weight in the world: and this also is the chief drawback of the book which describes his life. It is not that it overpraises him; for as respects his achievements, as well as his character, it would be difficult to do so, but that a personal importance is attributed to him which he never earned. This is a weakness on the part of his biographer, which,

under the circumstances, may well be pardoned; nor should we have alluded to it save for this reason; it seems evident that the importance might have been possessed, had it not been so very much taken for granted. He moved in a small circle of very self-conscious persons—a society of a highly intellectual kind, no doubt, but still 'a mutual admiration society,' and thereby lost half his usefulness. This is an error into which many of our men of mark have of late shewn themselves prone to fall, and demands particular notice. It is not, as is supposed, perhaps, by themselves, conducive to eminence, and it is fatal to influence upon a large scale. Had George Grote been less of a recluse, mixed with his fellow-creatures instead of shunning them, and spent upon them the sympathy that he reserved for books and theories, he would not have been associated in men's minds solely with the *History of Greece* and the Ballot. He was an exact historian, a far-seeing politician, whose theories, once deemed visionary, he lived to see adopted by more practical statesmen; an eminent financier, a ripe scholar—the elements of greatness were within him in unusual combination; and yet, save by a limited circle, he was not acknowledged to be a great man. It has been contemptuously said of one living Lord Chancellor by another, that 'he had no vices, and taught in a Sunday school;' and that significant definition of character, except that he did not teach in a Sunday school—(far from it)—may be well applied to George Grote. He was not sufficiently *en rapport* with humanity at large, and from the lack of its weaknesses, fell short of his own powers. His biography should not, however, be less welcome for the lesson it teaches in this respect. Moreover, it should in fairness be added, that the ability of George Grote, exceptional as it was, was not so exceptional as the genuineness of his convictions. It has been said that no Radical ever refuses a title; but in 1869, the subject of this memoir received a letter from the Prime Minister, the opening sentence of which ran thus: 'MY DEAR SIR—I have the satisfaction of proposing to you, with the authority of Her Majesty, that you should become a Peer of the United Kingdom.' And George Grote declined the peerage.

A C H E E N.

As the composition called Sympathetic Ink becomes visible when exposed to heat, so do certain names in geography emerge from mist and ignorance when a war illuminates their borders. Thus it is with the Sumatran state, known as Acheen, Achin, Atchin, which the Dutch are endeavouring to subdue, but which promises a most tenacious resistance to the battalions of Holland. It has rarely been heard of in Europe since the days of the early Dutch adventurers, and yet it is a kingdom whose annals and whose manners are among the most curious conceivable. Of all the nations speaking the Malayan tongue, the Acheenese are, so to speak, the most classic, preserving, in an almost perfect purity, the ancient language of their race. But what, and where is Acheen? It is a territory, having numerous ports upon its coast, opening upon the Bay of Bengal at one extremity, and on the Javan Sea at the other. Acheen Head, the utmost western point of the vast island, very familiar to Asiatic mariners as a bold and distinct

landfall for ships, is a triangular territory, inclosing a space of about thirty thousand square miles; it is exceedingly fertile, thickly populated, and has always been an object of ambition to the Dutch. A stranger arriving in its river capital is immediately struck by the appearance of the streets, if so they can be termed. The city stands like a sort of Asiatic Venice, on piles imbedded in the bottom of a river, with swampy margins, in the midst of a surrounding plain; all the houses are constructed of bamboo and timber. The inhabitants had nobody knows what origin. They are possibly Malays of the old stock—which seems, indeed, most probable; or they may belong to the gipsy race, everlastingly at sea, which sprang from the island of Celebes, the least known of all in that archipelago. Mohammedans in religion, they have, notwithstanding, never been known to persecute dissentient sects. It is indeed a proverb among their neighbours: 'An Acheen man will curse a Christian, and invite him to bread and salt'—salt, we are sorry to add, meaning, in the vocabulary of those strict religionists and abstainers, strong wine. Of course, the Acheenese, in trade, are cheats—all Orientals and some Europeans are; they will palm off, upon the unwary merchantmen, their mangostines, mangos, pine-apples, limes, and oranges; their beans, onions, and yams, which cost them nothing, as rare fruits and vegetables, in exchange for the richest produce of Europe, and especially of Holland. But they are of great use in those latitudes, nevertheless: for they can, at an incredibly short notice, provision, and even refit a vessel delayed by storms, and in distress. They are, however, wonderfully backward in point of manufacturing industry; they buy nearly all their clothing, of checkered blue and white, from Great Britain, in spite of Dutch remonstrances; with long-cloths from Madras, woollens from Yorkshire, and lustrings from China, besides weaving a peculiarly delicate taffeta of their own. Once they possessed native cannon-foundries, though they now buy up old brass guns at Woolwich; and nowhere, except at Rome or Vienna, can they meet with their competitors in gold and silver filigree-work. So much for their social condition. Their politics it would be impracticable to describe, since, for their terms of dignity, we have found it utterly impossible to find intelligible equivalents. Their monarchy is, nominally, an hereditary one, 'limited by assassination;' but above, below, and encircling him, are authorities of sacred and state orders, known under fearful and wonderful appellations, such as maharaja, laksamana, padukatuan, bandharas, velabalangs, and chabundhars. The kingdom at one time enjoyed an almost dominating power among the islands. It manned a fleet which is described as 'covering' the Strait of Malacca; it defied the Dutch, and defeated the Portuguese; it attracted the notice of our Queen Elizabeth, by scouring the Indian Ocean with a flotilla of a hundred and fifty sail; it doubled that maritime force within a period of five years; and became the imperious, if not the pirate state of the entire region.

Naturally, this Acheenese affair, local though it be, confers a present interest upon the whole island region—the Further Polynesia, as it is termed, in contradistinction to the Hither Polynesia, in the West or Atlantic Ocean. Excepting Borneo and Australia, it is the largest insular region on the

globe. Up to the close of the last century, however, the English knew scarcely anything about it, the Dutch holding its interior in deep secrecy; but after our victories in the East, we sent an agent on a visit of conciliation to the chief from Diamond Point to Siak, and he found twenty different national kindreds and languages, and no Sumatran nation. There were Malayan settlements at one point of the coast, and German settlements at another. But the word 'coast' scarcely implies the truth. There is, literally, no Sumatran 'coast,' unless at a few localities which foreigners have selected for their settlements. The vast island is fringed with swamps, varying from a width of fifty to one hundred and forty miles, and made next to impenetrable by the mangrove bush, which is at once an entanglement and a swamp, fed and made rank by the mountain streams, which also bring down the materials of innumerable sandbanks and shoals along the shore, so that the land absolutely gains upon the sea. But the interior is infinitely more interesting than the ocean margin; flowers of superb tint, a full yard across; pitcher-plants brimming with dew of perfect purity; fields of edible roots, each four hundred pounds in weight; lakes in which a fresh-water cockle supplies a meal for twenty men; elephants more monstrous than those of Ceylon; tigers, buffaloes, and rhinoceroses, all on the largest scale known in creation; trees of tremendous height, with crowns of foliage spreading from a smooth stem more than a hundred feet above the ground; and man alone diminutive. The Sumatran man is everlastingly fighting, or drinking, or smoking opium, or gambling, except when, to earn the means of paying for these luxuries, he is cultivating the pepper vine, or camphor, or the betelnut, so important to Asiatic commerce. There is, moreover, in this vast island a special industry devoted to the rearing of cats, which, being sold in royal markets, enjoy better treatment than many sultanias. Acheen is the native home, it may almost be asserted, of human ugliness. In feature, in figure, in the colour of hair and eyes, in expression, and in complexion, its people are among the most repulsive to the sight of all the races in the far East. They are aware of the fact, and their rajahs have exasperated the Dutch by endeavouring to purchase specimens of the peculiar style of beauty which is nursed amid the sickly swamps of Holland. Only one tribe excels the Acheenese in barbarity of appearance—the Battahs, reputed to be the last cannibals left upon the globe. They are a race so hideous, that it is possible to believe in any atrocities attributed to them; but whether or not they do eat human flesh, though the statement is testified to by European travellers, remains still doubtful. They dwell around a lake at the base of the mountains; no ethnologist has ever ascertained their origin; they have no king, no political institutions, and no code of laws, except that they bury their criminals alive. So, at anyrate, the Dutch writers affirm, perhaps in a scarcely less imaginative spirit than did M. Alexandre Dumas, when describing the 'dancing-gardens' of Java, with their Bayadere groups and illuminations. They tell, too, strange stories concerning the wealth stored up in the island city: treasures of agates, emeralds, and enamelled work; of gold chains, and the feathers of curious birds; and all else which is precious in the sight of a true Oriental,

after which, moreover, our phlegmatic friends of the *Zuider Zee* have hungered for three centuries and more. In conclusion, it may be worth while to tell what manner of men are their warriors, before whom the Dutch have quailed. Every village in their territory has its military force; their champions wear helmets, breastplates, and swords, and carry bows and arrows, with a carbine, and fifty charges of powder and shot, whenever a campaign is impending.

These, so far as a faint sketch may describe them, are the people with whom the Dutch are at war. They will, doubtless, make a stout and long resistance; but the end is not difficult to foresee. Like that of the Red Indian, their dominion is doomed. It appears, indeed, next to a law of nature that the European and the Asiatic shall not reign in the same land. Their traditions, their prejudices, their faiths, their manners, are utterly opposed; and of the ultimate issue there can be no doubt. The one hope of humanity must be that, when the final conflict takes place, Civilisation, while employing its strength, will remember its mercy.

HIS OWN EXECUTOR.

CHAPTER III.—A REPENTANT FATHER.

PROCU had not proposed to himself to entertain his newly-found son at dinner; indeed, he rather intended to put the boot on the other leg, as the saying is; but wisely judging him to be a youth of rather unpunctual habits, he did not count with any certainty on seeing him again the same day; and that was fortunate, for he didn't see anything more of him for a fortnight. Indeed, Procul had already begun to regard his visit as a vision, or a hoax, or something that had nothing in common with his present troubles; for he was now getting so extremely hard up, that if the most formidable ghost had made its appearance in his chambers, he would probably have asked it if it had any objection to giving him in a three months' bill for a hundred and fifty.

And yet what had happened was no delusion, for Procul, finding himself in the City, intent on some unpleasant financial business, looked in at the offices of Messrs Campion and Cromwell, the ship-brokers, and found that they had not the slightest doubt but that the young man was exactly what he had represented himself to be. He had mentioned to Mr Cromwell certain circumstances connected with the voyage out that had convinced him of his identity with their runaway apprentice; besides, he had offered to pay any compensation they might like to ask for the loss of his services; and when this offer was declined, he had proposed to stand a dozen of champagne. And what sinister motive could a man have for identifying himself with a runaway apprentice?

Although Porkington had, upon the spur of the moment, decided on claiming relationship with Harry Butt, yet he had not been altogether satisfied that he had done right. Under more prosperous circumstances, he would have preferred that the whole affair might have remained in oblivion; but now his needs were more pressing than any problematical dangers, and the idea of a son worth a hundred thousand or so cast a pleasant glow upon future prospects.

Uneasiness, therefore, and expectancy predominate

ated in Porkington's mind, and he had even thought of putting the matter into the hands of the authorities in Scotland Yard, when, fortunately, one morning his anxieties were relieved by a visit from Mr Orlando Costicle. Mr Porkington was urbane and accessible on principle—he never refused to see a visitor, even although a possible dun or creditor. Fair promises, and a sight of their debtor calm and unruffled, often restore confidence to the breasts of suspicious traders. Probably, Mr Orlando Costicle's business was disagreeable, still, it wouldn't mend by keeping.

Orlando Costicle was of about the same age as Porkington—that is, fifty or so, and in his way was as well preserved; he was bald, indeed, save for a fringe of hair at the sides and back of his head; and his whiskers—they were carefully trimmed into a neat mutton-chop shape; and his chin and upper lip cleanly, scrupulously shaved—his whiskers were gray, almost white; but there was a briskness about him, a jauntiness and elasticity of bearing, that seemed to indicate a man to whom age had given experience and wisdom, but who had not yet lost the energy and vigour of maturity. This carefully balanced appearance was, however, in some degree contradicted by the lines of his mouth, which betrayed a certain amount of weakness, that not all the training of a professional life could quite conceal.

'I must introduce myself,' Mr Costicle went on in a light and airy manner, 'as the representative of the parish of St Cuthbert, a parish of which I daresay you know little, but which is not equally unmindful of you. We have the honour, in our humble graveyard, to contain the bones of Sir Jasper Porkington, your distinguished ancestor.'

'Nay! I'm not quite so unmindful of you, as you think, Mr Costicle; I've a particularly lively recollection of being asked for a contribution for the restoration of my distinguished ancestor's tomb, and I thought it rather hard, seeing that I didn't inherit any of his money.'

'Ah, you must come and see us, Mr Porkington, and admire our improvements; you won't grudge us any subscription you may have honoured us with. But my visit to-day is not parochial; it's a sort of family matter. We have a young gentleman staying with us; a young colonist—Mr Butt.'

'I'm glad he's in such good hands, Mr Costicle,' said Procul, who really did feel relieved at the purport of the lawyer's visit. 'I was afraid he had come to some harm. He left me a fortnight ago, promising to return the same night, and I have seen nothing of him since.'

'Very thoughtless, indeed, of my young friend—very thoughtless. So like my own boy—my Sam—who is at present travelling—in the colonies, in fact—would leave us sometimes for a whole week.'

'We must remember what we were in our young days, Costicle—we fathers.'

'Ah, just so. Then I infer, from that remark, that my young friend has informed me correctly, and that he really is of distinguished parentage.'

'Look here, Costicle; the fact is just this: in early life, I made a sad imprudent marriage, which I concealed from my friends. My poor wife died when the boy was a few years old, and I was in very low-water; and, by the advice of a friend, I sent the lad to sea, when about seven years old, to harden him a bit. Well, the lad ran away, and I could never, notwithstanding all my inquiries,

make anything out. Now, there are certain family reasons, apart from the scandal, and so on, to which my public acknowledgment of the boy as my own would give rise, which render it desirable that—in fact, that he shouldn't openly appear as my son. I needn't tell you that I'm on very unpleasant terms with part of my family, and that if they know that I should leave an heir, they would take care he should be excluded from all share in the family settlements. And yet, of course, you know a father's feelings, Costicle: I should like the lad to come and live with me, and share my home; and so on.'

'A very proper feeling, sir,' said Costicle; 'but there are certain arrangements.'

'I'm afraid I must go down to the House now,' said Porkington, looking at his watch. 'Can I set you down anywhere?'

'Thank you; no. I am going City-wards; but my—the object of this visit—in point of fact, our young friend has put his affairs entirely into my hands.'

'And I shall be glad to discuss them with you some other day; but just now'—

'Perhaps,' said Orlando eagerly, 'you would honour us with your company at dinner, to talk over this matter? Say to-morrow at eight. Mrs Costicle will send you a card.'

'Oh, you're very good. I shall have to put off the Duke of Gruffham. Yet, nevertheless, I'll come.—Put down the address, please, Antoine, and remind me that I dine to-morrow with Mr'—

'Costicle, of Costicle's Grove, Chelsea, ahem!' cried Orlando. 'We shall be much honoured, sir. I have the pleasure of wishing you good-morning.'

Costicle went off highly delighted at having secured the Honourable Procul for his dinner-table. 'How pleased Mrs C. will be,' he said to himself; 'and how adroitly I managed it! I'll ask Deputy Dibble to meet him; I'll tell him about his putting off the Duke of Gruffham. It will go down with the vestry, that, I think.'

Meantime, Porkington drove off in his cabriolet, but he did not go directly to Westminster; he called first at a large house in South Kensington, No. 173 Gulliver Terrace, and inquired for Lord Sertayne King. His lordship was at home, and would see Mr Porkington in his study.

Procul was shewn into a room on the second floor which looked over the mews at the back. The windows, however, were of ground glass, so that nothing was to be seen but the indistinct outline of low roofs and chimney-stacks. It was a cheerless-looking room, covered with a faded Turkey carpet, about which was scattered much cigar-ash; and it was furnished with a leather-covered writing-table, on which rested a Ruff's Guide, an old Army List, and the Red-book for half-a-dozen years ago. A shabby old leather easy-chair, and a few battered library chairs, completed the furniture of the room, which smelt powerfully of tobacco.

This little room was the usual refuge of Lord Sertayne King when, at periods of pecuniary exhaustion, he was driven perforce to the shelter of his own roof-tree. His wife, Lady Jane, who was of Scotch extraction, managed everything there: all the money that supported their establishment was rigidly secured to her; the furniture was hers, everything in the house. Lord Sertayne was only a lodger in his own house, though, indeed, he was

hardly treated with the consideration that a lodger usually is. Imagine a lodger who is in arrears with his rent, and who relies upon his landlady for the supply of daily necessities, and you will form an idea of Lord Sertayne's position at 173 Gulliver Terrace.

'Ah, Procul, my boy,' cried Lord Sertayne, 'I'm glad to see ye. Come, sit down, and tell me what brings you here. Ye'll have something to drink?' He rang the bell, and a servant appeared. 'Bring soda-water and a bottle of brandy, do you hear!' he cried fiercely.

Presently, the man reappeared, having a covert grin on his face.

'Please, m' lord, my ledly says there's no soda-water in the hoose, and it's too soon for any brandy yet.'

'Here, go out, and fetch some, do you hear!' cried Lord Sertayne.

'If your lordship 'll gie me the siller.'

'Here, Procul; lend me half a sovereign, will you?'

'Oh, hang it! Sertayne, never mind the brandy. One doesn't want to be always drinking.'

'Away, Sandy! we'll have nothing to drink at all.'

'But, I say, Procul,' said Lord Sertayne, after the man had retired, 'this is unendurable, isn't it?'

'You've stood it a good while now, Sertayne.'

'And why? Because I can't help it. It's this want of money that cripples me. That's where she has me.'

'A very good thing too, Sertayne: you want somebody to hold you pretty tight.'

'But it's out of all conscience. Why, what do you think—how do you think she serves me at dinner? Bowes has his orders, and when I have had my two glasses of sherry, he fills me up with toast-and-water. Oh, it's too scandalous.'

'You get your board and lodgings, anyhow.'

'What of that! You could get that in a work-house.'

Procul laughed heartily. 'Anyhow, it's good for your liver, Sertayne: why, you look twice the man you did. And your hand's as steady as a bit of steel, I daresay. Do you play billiards much now?'

'Nobody will play with me,' said Sertayne gloomily; 'and they bar me at pool now at the club, unless I'll have a life knocked off; and that I can't stand.'

'And how do you get on at écarté?'

Sertayne shook his head. 'There's nothing to be made out of that now; fellows are too sharp. But hang it, Procul, you didn't come here to talk over my affairs. What wickedness have you afoot now?'

'No wickedness at all; just the other way. A bit of well-doing.'

'What! are you going to get married, Procul?'

'No; at least, not now. I'm going to undertake the education of a young man.'

'That's bad for him, I should say. Who is he?'

'A lad just come home from Australia with a pot of money.'

'And what is he to you, Procul?'

'He's my son.'

'Well, that is something strange,' said Sertayne gravely. 'But what are you going to do with him?'

'Shew him the world.'

'Help him to spend his money too.'

'Somebody will get hold of him, if I don't.'

'Does he play?'

'We'll teach him, if he doesn't.'

'Is there much to be made out of him?'

'He's worth a hundred thousand, I calculate.'

'And what do you want me to do?'

'To become his tutor. Some City people have got hold of him now; want him to marry a daughter, or something of the sort. But we'll spoil their game. He'll soon tire of them, when he sees what real life is.'

'We'll introduce him to the Asphodel—eh, Proc?'

Proc nodded.

'And we'll play the old game. O Proc, it quite warms one's heart to think about it; only, you see, it wants a little ready-money to start with. You must lend me fifty pounds, my boy.'

'I'll see what I can do, when the time comes. But we mustn't be in a hurry. The youth is moral at present; I daresay, probably, has never touched the bones. But he has got it in him; a chip of the old block—eh, King? and it is only a question of time if we handle him properly. The best thing will be to get the Asphodel to take him up, and draw him on to begin play with her mildly. A lad like that would be as soft as wax where a woman's concerned. You must see the Asphodel.'

'I don't know whether I can do anything with her; she has been very cool with me lately, and she don't half like you, my boy; but if the youth is good-looking, she'll take him up fast enough. What do you call the young cub?'

'Butt—Harry Butt.'

'An ugly name too. When shall we begin to tap him?'

'When you see him about with me, you must come up and be civil to him. I'll take care to give you a character for once!'

CHAPTER IV.—COSTICLE'S GROVE.

All this time Harry Butt had been staying with the Costicles, at No. 1 Costicle's Grove, Chelsea. His acquaintance with Sam Costicle had been a sufficient introduction to the good opinion of Mrs Costicle and her daughter Ellen. The fact of his having a hundred thousand pounds was a passport to the good graces of Orlando Costicle and his son.

In the society of the fair Ellen, who was a pretty, lively girl of some twenty years of age, Harry became acquainted with all the remarkable scenes in London. He was taken to the Academy, to the South Kensington Museum, the Albert Hall, to his great mental weariness and torture; but he also made acquaintance with the horsewomen in the Row, whom he greatly admired, and with the band in Kensington Gardens, and at times with 'the Zoo,' and other innocent, if not exciting resorts. And at nights they went to the theatre, Harry buying boxes like a millionaire—no 'orders' for him, if you please; and altogether they were very gay and happy, only, like everything else, it could not last.

This is the night of the dinner-party, and Porkington is coming to put an end to all this idyllic life. Ellen Costicle, as she sat in her own room, ready dressed for dinner, was a fair and pleasing sight. Her head was resting on her hand, and she

was looking thoughtfully at a bouquet of flowers that had just come in for her, and of which she divined that Harry was the sender. She wore a blue dress of some light gauzy material, which shewed her shoulders and neck, shapely, and fair, and smooth; her face was oval, rather dark, with a bloom upon it like that of a ripened plum; her hair was dark too, and was partly disposed in bands round her head, and partly gathered into a great fold at the back. Ellen was proud of her hair, and of the fact that she had more than she could well dispose of, without the aid of artificial plaits. She was a little flushed, for she had an idea that this night would be an important one in her life, and she didn't exactly know how it would go. She thought that Harry meant to say something decisive to her, and she hadn't made up her mind whether she liked him or not. She was sure that she liked him, but was not equally sure whether she liked him enough to marry him.

Ellen would never have thought of allowing herself to entertain the question at all, if she had not known that Harry was undeniably eligible on the score of wealth. In education and refinement, there was, it was true, a good deal wanting. But then, after all, there was more of real knowledge and a more gentlemanly spirit about Harry, Ellen thought, than about the other men she knew.

As Ellen was sitting thus, thinking over matters, Mrs Costicle bustled in; she was gorgeously apparelled in plum-coloured satin, and was altogether a very nice, plump, matronly figure, as she turned herself round before Ellen and asked if 'she'd do.' 'Capitally, mamma,' said Ellen. 'Yes; you are all right everywhere, and you look very nice.' 'One must needs look nice when one expects "an honourable" to dine with us,' said Mrs Costicle. 'My dear, I've borrowed a *Peagee* from the Browns, and I've looked out all about Porkington. He's most splendidly connected. He's the son of Viscount Porkington, by Lady Emily, daughter of Lord Arthur Procul, who was a younger son of the Duke of Gruffham. Fancy! what a fine connection for our young friend. Let me see—if Lord Henry and Lord Charles should die without leaving sons, and they've only four apiece, and if anything should happen to Lord John's seven, why, he might be heir to a viscounty. Ellen, dear, think of that!'

'That isn't at all likely,' said Ellen.

'No; but it might happen, dear; and I'm sure, among all his grand relations, he'll never find a prettier girl than you. Only, Ellen, mind what you're about—strike while the iron's hot.'

'That's nonsense about striking, mamma.'

'It isn't nonsense, Ellen: you look your very best, and I'll lend you my amethysts, if you like, dear.'

Ellen didn't wear the amethysts, however; only a plain gold band with a turquoise locket, that set off her dark skin very nicely. She felt a little nervous as she went down-stairs, partly at the idea of meeting a man so far out of her 'sphere.' She was not a bit of a snob, but she had been brought up to take an interest in the affairs of people she knew nothing about, but who were supposed to be the high-priests and exemplars of the faith, the one saving faith that secures the progress, nay, the very existence of society.

When Ellen went down into the drawing-room, she found Harry Butt sitting by the fire. He was

dressed for dinner, for Orlando had persuaded him to buy a ready-made dress suit till a proper evening costume could be made for him—but he looked large and awkward in it. Ellen eyed him with a little dissatisfaction. She wanted him to look nice, and he didn't, exactly. Why, even William, for all his plain looks and downcast ways, was more of a gentleman in appearance; and papa—papa looked quite radiant and aristocratic, as he appeared in the drawing-room in the most faultless attire, as gay and debonair as if he hadn't a care in the world. Mamma was radiant too, in the plum-coloured satin with the amethysts, and a head-dress of black and gold; and altogether they looked a very nice party, Ellen thought, if it hadn't been for Mr Butt, who seemed so awkward and uncouth.

Then came Mr Deputy Dibble, a little florid man, with a protuberant paunch and weak little hands, which gyrated on his wrists as he pointed a period or commenced a narrative. He wore a frilled shirt, and a diamond brooch in it. And as soon as he came in, he began to flatter Mrs Costicle, who, nevertheless, was silent and *distracted*; indeed, her ears were at full-cock listening for the arrival of, her aristocratic guest.

He came at last—half an hour late for dinner, with an air of ineffable calm, that Ellen thought was charming. After he had spoken to Mrs Costicle, he made his way round the room, and came to where Henry Butt was sitting, and put his hand on his shoulder with a familiar, easy gesture. Then the two began to talk; and Ellen felt more than once that the keen observant eye of Mr Porkington rested upon her. What could they be talking about, those two? Ellen's reflections were interrupted by Deputy Dibble, who advanced with his arm stuck out like a catapult.

'Permit me, my dear Miss Costicle, to have the pleasurable honour of conducting you to dinner!'

'Thank you, Mr Dibble,' she said, rising and accepting his arm. 'I know how much pleasure you take—all gentlemen do, I suppose—in your dinner!'

'Pon my word, Miss Costicle, I take far more in the charming companion that I am blessed with!'

'Ha!' said Orlando, seating himself opposite the soup, 'what have we here?—My dear, what do I see at your end of the table?'

'Everything is down on the card, Costicle,' said Mrs Costicle with dignity.

'Ho, ho! What! we've got a bill of fare, have we! For my part, I like the good old-fashioned English ways—don't you, Deputy?—see your joint, and carve yourself. Well, well, there's one thing they shan't deprive me of, with their newfangled ways, and that's the pleasure of taking wine with a friend.—Mr Porkington, my dear sir, a glass of sherry.—My dear Deputy, will you join us?'

The Deputy swelled out like the frog in the fable. 'Quite unfashionable, my dear fellow; but still I agree with you; nothing like the old customs—eh, Mr Porkington?'

'No custom can be a bad one that introduces one to a glass of good sherry,' said Porkington good-humouredly.

'Very good, very good!' said the Deputy, turning quite purple with pleased excitement. 'That reminds me of a remark that was made at the Lord Mayor's table, a good many years ago, on an occasion when your father—if I'm not mistaken, Mr

Porkington, your father, the Viscount—when he was present, along with Her Majesty's ministers.'

'Run a pin into him,' whispered Harry—'run a pin into the poor Deputy.'

'Gracious!' said Ellen; 'why?'

'To let the talk out of him; he'll drone on for ever if you don't.'

'I like Deputy Dibble's stories *very much*,' said Ellen demurely, 'and I beg you won't distract my attention.'

'When Her Majesty's ministers were dining at my Lord Mayor's table,' went on Dibble; 'it was the year of the Chartist riots, if I'm not mistaken—What's the matter, Mr Porkington?—Good gracious, madam, loosen his neckcloth!'

Porkington had turned deadly pale all of a sudden, and clutched at the air with his hands; but he recovered himself in a moment. There was nothing to account for it, only Mr Costicle's ancient butler was tottering round the table, murmuring: 'Ock or sherry?'

'A little dizziness, I'm subject to, that's all,' said Porkington: 'the late sittings at the House, I fancy, predispose one to that sort of thing.'

'The very thing that happened at the Mansion-house table!' cried Dibble.

'Ah, sir!' said Mrs Costicle archly, 'you should get a wife to look after you, and prevent your keeping such late hours!'

'I'm afraid the wives of most of my friends keep worse hours than their husbands.'

'Ah, that's because they marry giddy, fashionable creatures! Some nice domesticated girl, my dear sir, who's been brought up in a quiet family.'

'Ah,' said Porkington, with a mock-sigh, 'where shall I find such a phoenix? The race is extinct, my dear madam.'

'By no means, Mr Porkington; you do the sex injustice; they are to be found, if you men will only look for them.'

'Hollo!' said Harry Butt—a couple of glasses of wine had removed his shyness—'hollo! why, there's Mother Budgeon peeping in at the door! What is she doing here?'

'Don't expose the secrets of our grandeur,' said Ellen. 'Is it possible you haven't recognised our butler?'

'Why, it's old Budgeon the sexton!'

'Hush! don't talk so loud. Whenever we have a dinner-party, they come here. He waits at table, and she helps in the cooking—only you mustn't tell anybody.'

'I shall be glad to have a secret with *you*, Miss Costicle.'

'Yes, that will do,' said Ellen, nodding her head approvingly—'that will do for a beginning. We shall begin to civilise you soon. Let us once get you to begin saying what you don't mean, the rest of your progress will be rapid.'

'But I do mean it, Miss Costicle; only I wish that the secret were of more importance.'

'As, for instance!' said Ellen, raising her eyebrows slightly.

'Well,' said Harry, somewhat nonplussed, 'if we were more of friends than we are, you know.'

'Ah, you are very maladroit, Mr Butt: you should never—your friends will teach you that when they teach you whist—you should never lead from a single card; if you make a pretty speech, you should be prepared to follow it with a prettier.'

'And didn't I?'

'No, certainly not; you insinuated that we were not particularly good friends; and, in fact, you made a mess of it altogether.'

'Well, that's not very encouraging.'

'No; you want practice; that's all: these things don't come naturally. Put your brains through a sieve, and then fry them into crisp little morsels; else you will never make a figure in good society.'

'What's that about fried brains? Ah, a very nice dish too,' said the Deputy, pricking up his ears; 'taken out of a calf's head, you mean, Miss Costicle?'

'Precisely so, Deputy; the very thing we were talking about.'

'Hang it, Miss Costicle; don't hit a fellow like that,' said Harry; 'wait till I think of something like a repartee.'

'Too late, sir; mamma has given the signal for retiring; you must jump up and open the door, sir, quick.—There, you did that very nicely,' she whispered encouragingly to him as she passed out of the room.

'My dear,' said Mrs Costicle to Ellen, 'I'm very much pleased with you; you did everything beautifully. And he was watching you all the time—Mr Porkington, I mean—so fatherly; oh, it was beautiful! So romantic, isn't it, dear; only cook made such a mess of the sweets; however, I'm thankful things have gone off as they did. I wonder what he'll settle upon Master Harry. A nice fortune that youth will have, what with his own money and what his father gives him. Well, it's better to be born lucky than rich, they say; and, upon my word, I think there's a great deal of truth in the proverb.'

A CHAPTER ON HERMITS.

SIR HENRY MALEVERET, one of London's 'worthies' nine that were of might, after helping to recover the Holy City from paynim hands, finding his merits unappreciated, retired in dudgeon to a cave near Jacob's Well, of which he constituted himself guardian; insisting upon every would-be drinker of the waters having a round with him ere quenching his thirst. This muscular Christian of the olden time might have come home to play the hermit, for his sovereign would scarcely have refused to have inducted such a doughty doer as the hero of Cornhill into a cell, under the royal seal and patent, as English kings were wont to do when a man could not live a life of saintly seclusion without leave obtained. In such licensed hermits, Shropshire seems to have been especially rich. In 1170, one Bletherus sanctified Botwood by his presence. In the reign of Henry III there was a hermitage on the Wrekin, tenanted by Nicholas de Denton as 'Hermit of Mount Gilbert,' to whom the king, by a royal patent, ordered the burgesses of Bridgenorth to pay six quarters of wheat annually out of the issues of Pendlestone Mill, which they held under the crown; to give him 'greater leisure for holy exercises, and to support him during his life, so long as he shall be a hermite on the aforesaid mountain.' Edward III. appointed no less than four hermits to different hermitages in the neighbourhood of Bridgenorth. The power of appointment was sometimes vested in ecclesiastical authorities; in 1493, we find the Prior of Durham granting a licence to John Man,

a Yorkshireman, to lead the life of a hermit ; and in 1499 he licensed three others of the same inclination. At the beginning of the same century, the bridge over the Tyne, at Newcastle, boasted a hermit of its own, supposed to have been buried in his cell, for a skeleton was found in a corner of the pillar on which the tower stood, when the remains of the ancient bridge were removed in 1775. All this, however, is by the way, our purpose being to discourse of those who embraced a life of solitude when the odour of sanctity no longer clung to the recluse's vocation.

In the reign of Elizabeth, there dwelt at Foxhill, Lincolnshire, a rich, benevolent, accomplished gentleman. Lord of a fair estate, the happy father of a well-married daughter, loved by his tenantry, esteemed by a wide circle of friends, Henry Welby, at the age of forty, was a man to be envied. His happiness would have been unalloyed but for the existence of an ill-regulated younger brother, who one day capped all condoned misdeeds by attempting to shoot his patient relation. Instead of handing the ungrateful wretch over to the law, as he deserved, Welby took the strange resolution of inflicting a lifelong penance upon himself by retiring from the world he was well fitted to enjoy. Believing solitude was easiest found in a great city, he did not fly to a cave on some wild desert shore, but leaving Lincolnshire for London, took up his abode in a house in Grub Street. Three rooms, opening upon each other, he set apart for his sole use—one for eating, one for studying, one for sleeping ; and from the day he entered the house to that upon which he was carried out of it to be buried in Cripple-gate Church, he never set his foot outside the narrow bounds he had prescribed himself ; 'neither in all that time did son-in-law, daughter, grandchild, brother, sister, or kinsman, stranger, tenant, or servant, young or old, rich or poor, of what degree or condition soever, look upon his face'—save only his serving-maid, Elizabeth, who lighted his fires, provided his simple food, and kept his rooms clean. And even she seldom beheld her master, since he always retired to his bedroom while she set his meals on the table, and took refuge in his study while she was busy in his chamber.

A linguist and a scholar, 'never less alone than when alone,' Welby found companionship in books, the hours not devoted to those silent friends being dedicated to devotion. He let his beard go unshaven, his hair untrimmed, until he resembled a hermit of the wilderness rather than the denizen of a city. He dressed in sad-coloured cloth. No flesh, fowl, or fish ever passed his lips ; oatmeal water-gruel sufficing his appetite, supplemented now and then with a salad of cool herbs. In the article of bread he was somewhat extravagant, eating only the middle of the loaf. On extraordinary occasions, he indulged in the yolk of an egg, treated himself to some sweetmeats, or sent for a draught of fresh milk from a red cow. His one beverage was not, as one would have thought, water, but 'four-shilling beer.' While living thus frugally himself, the hermit of Grub Street fed his servants well, and no caller upon business had reason to complain of scant hospitality. He kept no holidays, but never failed to provide plenty of seasonable cheer at Christmas, Easter, and other festival times. Then quite a banquet was served in his own room, with no lack of wine. Pinning

a clean napkin before him, and donning a pair of holland sleeves, the recluse would sit down and cut up each dish in turn, sending one to one poor neighbour, one to another, until the table was bare again ; when he would say grace, put up his knife, have the cloth cleared away, without having tasted a morsel himself. Nor was he mindful of his neighbours only at such times. As he sat at his window, if he saw any weak, sick, or lame folk pass by, he would send after them 'not a trifle to serve them for the present, but such as would relieve them many days after.' The abstinence this city anchorite practised did not shorten his days, for he attained the age of eighty-four, dying in 1636, having spent more than half his life in his unselfish seclusion ; and we cannot say he did not deserve the Water-poet's valedictory compliment :

Old Henry Welby—well be thou for ever,
Thy Purgatory's past, thy Heaven ends never.

A very different specimen of humanity with a craze was Roger Crab, the self-styled English Hermit, who thought himself the wonder of the age he lived in, because he abjured flesh meats, and went in for water, combining in his single person all the virtues of the vegetarian and teetotaler. Like some modern abstainers, he delighted in contrasting the old Roger with the new one, setting up the former as a frightful example of pride, drunkenness, and gluttony, glorying in lying, cheating, and cozening his neighbours ; while the latter, of course, was the quintessence of earthly goodness. Crab had, in his hot manhood, served under Cromwell, using his sword, he says, in pretence of liberty and peace, and fighting that good fight, had his skull cloven by a royalist blade. Then he somehow offended against military discipline, and was sentenced to death, but escaped with two years' imprisonment. Upon being released, he set up as 'a haberdasher of hats' in Chesham, Buckinghamshire ; a calling he followed until he suddenly awoke to the sinfulness of lying, swearing, and deceiving necessary to carrying on his trade, and convinced himself besides that the Rechabites, who neither planted vineyards, nor built houses, nor indulged in animal food, nor drank strong liquors, were the models men should imitate. So, selling off his stock in trade, he gave all he had to the poor, and retired to a small piece of ground at Ickenham, whereon he built a hut, in which he lived upon broth thickened with bran, pudding made with bran and turnip-leaves, herbs, roots, bread, dock-leaves, mallows, and grass. He prided himself upon being alone in the land 'in this opinion of eating,' the only man of the same mind having died before he got used to the change in his diet. Crab, however, was not allowed to starve himself in peace, possibly because he inveighed furiously against those who declined to follow his example. He was put in the stocks, sent to prison again and again, and driven from place to place. In 1655, he was living in a cave near Uxbridge ; but he died in London in 1680, and was buried in Stepney churchyard, where his tombstone may still be seen, and the quaint, laudatory lines in his memory be read.

While the hermit of Ickenham was teaching by example that sackcloth is the only wear for a Christian, his brother of Dinton was shewing in the same way that there is nothing like leather.

He too had done the Roundheads some service; for John Bigg, a man of some education, and pretty well to do as times went, had acted as clerk to the regicide lord of Dinton Manor, and, according to local tradition, officiated, as one of the masked headsman, at the execution of Charles. After the Restoration, Bigg grew misanthropic, and withdrew from the world, making his summer home in the beech-woods of the Chiltern Hills, and dwelling in winter in a cave near his old master's house. He subsisted upon the unasked charity of the people round about, who supplied him with meat, and filled his three bottles with milk, ale, and strong beer. He never begged except for leather wherewith to mend his clothes—a short jacket, a pair of trousers, or rather knickerbockers, and a cloak with a peaked hood, which did duty as head-covering. He was his own tailor, and all his garments were of leather, repairs being expeditiously, if not neatly executed, by nailing any piece he found or begged wherever he could find room for it. After living in this way for more than thirty years, Bigg died in 1697, at the age of sixty-seven. His shoes, composed of more than ten layers of leather patches, are yet preserved, one in the Ashmolean Museum, the other in the collection of Sir John Vanhatten of Dinton.

In 1767, Edward Train died at Gateshead; for twenty years he had lived in his garden, and never slept in a bed: he was a victim of disappointed love. Should we be far wrong, we wonder, in saying the same of Angus Roy Fletcher, who, shrinking from the society of his kind, made himself a home in the wildest part of Glenorchy, his only companions his goats and his dog. A good shot, and an expert angler, river and moor yielded all the food he needed, while his flock supplied him with drink. At night, he and his four-footed friends slept together in a rude hut. This solitary liver was always ready to share a meal with a hungry wayfarer, although he might have said with Denmark's Prince: 'Man delights me not, nor woman either.' Whether he lived long enough to tire of such a lonely life, or died in his mountain hut, is past our telling.

In 1864, a man named Weales died near Maryport, at the age of eighty-seven. For twelve or fourteen years he had lived in a small open-roofed, one-roomed dwelling, of which he was both architect and builder, and which stood in the corner of one of two fields belonging to him. His solitude was shared by a dog and a cat. Weales was partial to dirt as well as discomfort; he never cleaned his abode, or took off his clothes, and declined to have anything to do with soap and water. In the last two years of his existence he was obliged to go upon crutches, but it was seldom he went outside the door, and he never ventured many yards beyond it. Towards the end of his miserable life, he was barely able to sit up in his bed, placed by the side of the fire, which was only kept alive by the kind offices of casual passers-by, upon whom he also depended for provisions. The cat and dog fed from the same dish as their master, upon victuals cooked in a frying-pan, which they cleaned with their tongues after every meal. Weales lived, if it can be called living, upon an income of twenty pounds, derived from his estate, the two fields aforesaid.

The Old Hermit of Newton Burgoland, near Ashby-de-la-Zouch, William Lole, who, nine years ago, was still in the land of the living, had original

ideas as to what manner of life a hermit should lead. True hermits, he argued, were always abettors of freedom, and he therefore felt free to dwell in a comfortable cottage, to dine well, take his beer and his 'baccy at discretion, without being a hermit any the less. The truth is, Lole was rather a crazy hobby-rider than a hermit, but his hobbies were very inoffensive ones; his odd fancies being spent upon the decorating of his garden and the decking of his own person. The former he filled with strange devices, such as flower-covered mounds to represent the graves of the Reformers, floral effigies of the apostles, and fantastic designs intended to picture purgatory and the inquisition. If his parterres were laid out in a childish way, he only anticipated the fashion of making a flower-bed look as much like a bit of carpet as possible. But being as fond of symbolism as a modern ritualist, and as fond of emblems as old Quarles, his garden was a mass of emblematical beds, graced with explanatory mottoes in flowers and coloured pebbles. There was Feast Square with its Venison Pasty, Round of Beef, and other appropriate dishes. There was 'Gossip's Court,' with the motto, 'Don't tell anybody;' the orchestra, with 'God save our noble Queen,' and 'Britons never shall be Slaves.' The kitchen-walk, with beds shaped like cooking utensils. This wonderful garden contained a wedding walk, three seats of self-inquiry, a Bank of Faith, a Holy Mount, a Noah's Ark, a rainbow, a Jacob's Ladder, a church, a heart inclosing the Rose of Sharon, the hermit's coat of arms, the sand-glass of Time, and a multitude of other fanciful devices. The whimsical old fellow treated his body much the same as he treated his garden. He provided himself with twelve emblematical suits. One was a kind of frock-coat of soft brown leather, embroidered with braid, buttoned down the front with white buttons, and bound round the waist with a white girdle. Another was of white cotton, hanging loosely over the body, with the 'order of the Star'—a heart-shaped badge inscribed 'Liberty of Conscience'—on the left breast. A third was made after the style of military costume at the beginning of this century; with this he wore a hat that cost him many a sleepless night in its invention, and many a meal to pay for its being made. This, which Lole considered a perfect beauty, was something between the old cocked-hat and that now worn by field-officers; but instead of a plume, it was surmounted with two upright peaks. This wonderful production was only one of twenty odd specimens of headgear, such as the Patent Tea-pot, with its motto, 'To draw the flavour out of the tea best—Union and Good-will;' the Wash-basin of Reform, inscribed 'White-washed face and collyred heart;' the Beehive, inscribed 'The toils of industry are sweet; a wise people live in peace;' the Helmet, with its belligerent promise, 'Will fight for the birthright of conscience, love, life, property, and national independence;' and the Odd-fellows' hat, with its out-at-elbows motto, 'Without money, without friends, without credit.' Our odd hermit found it difficult to make both ends meet, and in 1864 it was sadly written of him: 'He is now in such poverty that he is thankful for any assistance which does not require him to relinquish his present mode of living. He has a brother in competent circumstances, who has offered to share his home with him, but, "No," says the old man, "for what would then become of my

garden? My heart is in my garden. I cannot leave it."

In New Kilpatrick churchyard lies Besom Jamie, the Killermont hermit, once the Fat Boy of a travelling exhibition, but in later days a hawker of besoms, living, when he was at home, in a house of his own raising, called Mossnappy Hermitage, furnished with a lot of tin utensils and rubbish of all sorts he had collected in his travels. One day, a neighbour of Jamie's, who had not seen the hermit for some time, fearing something was wrong with him, broke open the door of his hermitage, and found the poor fellow all but dead. He died the next day, leaving behind him sixteen pounds in his pockets, and more than twenty pounds in the bank. Another Scotch recluse, who tried to hide his nationality under the name of Smith, made himself a nest on Skiddaw, near the edge of a cliff, about three hundred yards up the breast of the mountain, by clearing out a hole about three feet deep, and four feet in diameter, lining it with moss, and making a portable roof of reeds, which he shut down from the inside when he retired to rest; curling himself like a dog, to accommodate his limbs to the limited space at his command. A tourist who saw him after he had spent three summers and winters on Skiddaw, thus describes him: 'His appearance is ludicrous in the extreme. His hair is thrown over his shoulder, and hangs far down his back, forming the only protection to his head; his clothes seem to have been in the height of the fashion twenty years ago, and are quite threadbare; he wears no shoes, and goes on his peregrinations in his stocking-feet. He makes almost daily visits to Keswick, where he purchases tea and sugar, mixing and eating them dry. His only cooking apparatus is a small pan, in which he cooks messes of very questionable ingredients, boiling them by the aid of lighted tallow. He has quite a passion for water-colour drawing, and has proved himself no mean artist. He enjoys very good health considering his mode of living, but has occasionally a touch of rheumatism.' This strange character was sometimes heard preaching to the sheep on the hills, and was once unfortunate enough to be sent to the county jail for frightening some of the folks about Keswick. Possibly, he still occupies his mountain nest, for the latest account of his doings concludes: 'Having finished his term of imprisonment, he has now gone back to his old haunts, a cleaner, if not a wiser man.'

It would seem that there are water hermits as well as land hermits; at least we have heard of one. He had been a schoolmaster in Cornwall, until he took it into his head to buy a ship's launch, convert it into a sailing-boat, and make it his abode, holding no communication with the outer world except when necessity compelled him to go on shore to lay in supplies. During the summer months, Nicholls cruised about the coast; in the winter he laid up in some creek. This went on for four years, until he had his boat so badly injured by the wintry gales that he dared not leave Mylor Creek. One morning the boat was boarded by a cousin, who, entering the cabin, found the man he sought lying dead: his own hand had ended a life wearisome to himself, and useless to others. Wisely spake one, whom shallow-minded men called a cynic: 'Heaven has given us affections that we may use them—not smother and kill them; and a noble world to live in, that we may admire it

and Him who made it—not shrink from it, as though we dared not live there, but must turn our backs upon it and its bountiful Provider.'

SPRING-WORSHIP.

As some fond mother loves to run,
And in her darling's cradle peep,
And feast upon him in his sleep,
And finds her doting never done;

To watch his blossomhood expand;
Detect fresh beauties every day;
Nor lets an hour slip away
Without some favour from her hand—

So I, when Candlemas is o'er,
And leaden days of gloomy cheer,
Delight to watch the budding year,
To see it flourish more and more.

I think it then a natural sin—
When shooting germs begin to prick,
And rubies gem the budding quick—
A kind of crime to stay within.

Then daily I frequent the lane,
And where the crystal runlets rise;
And thank God for his balmy skies,
And feast upon the fair champaign;

Watch lovingly the growth of green,
From lattice-work to copious shroud;
And every flight of feathery cloud;
And every aspect of the scene;

The fallows, mellowing richly dark;
The woodlands purpling every hill;
The flying bows; the bickering rill;
The heavens, inviting up the lark.

The woodland violet, white or blue;
The native topaz of the bank;
Assailed from heavens on either flank
By wild wood-music, fluting through;

The snowdrop with its airy bell;
The crocus with its golden cup;
The dainty cowslip starting up;
The daisy meek, in many a dell.

The spiritual lilies of the vale;
The spotted foxglove, quaint of hue;
The classic hyacinth steeped in dew;
The pansy, lady of the dale.

For thy sworn lover, Spring, am I;
I watch thee with assiduous love,
Crowned from eternal founts above,
My heart is something like thy sky.

And in thine eyes I get a gleam,
A gleam of everlasting youth;
Ah me, the imperishable truth,
The purity, and deathless dream!

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